

Washington, DC (October 13, 2011) – The House Homeland Security Committee on Thursday passed the "Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012" (H.R. 3116), fiscally responsible legislation that authorizes key programs and missions within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

The authorization included several items introduced by Rep. Gus Bilirakis (FL-09), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response and Communications.

"DHS has not had an authorization bill since it was created in 2003, and this legislation provides the department with necessary guidance, tools, and resources to help secure our homeland from terrorist attacks," Bilirakis said.

Measures introduced by Bilirakis include:

- [Student Visa Security Improvement Act \(H.R. 1211\)](#) , which will improve the background checks conducted on student visa applicants from high-risk areas and enhance America's ability to ensure that foreign students are abiding by the terms of their visas once in the U.S.
- [Metropolitan Medical Response System Program Act of 2011 \(H.R. 1411\)](#) , to assist state and local governments in preparing for and responding to mass casualty incidents resulting from acts of terrorism, natural disasters, and other emergencies.
- Clarification to language pertaining to the vulnerability of coastal populations that will help DHS properly assess the risk to Florida.
- Repeal of the National Biosurveillance Integration Center, a duplicative and wasteful program that costs taxpayers \$7 million per year.